RDH to receive new lease on life with more than $40 million in upgrades

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The 35-year-old Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH) is about to receive a significant facelift, to the tune of $40 million.

Key areas of the hospital will be upgraded including the courtyard, foyer, entrance, outpatients’ clinics, bathrooms, allied health and public access areas. A new eye clinic will also be constructed.

Treasurer David Tollner said RDH is the Northern Territory’s major hospital and has on average 2000 patients and staff visit the grounds each day, so it certainly has had a workout over the years.

“Hospitals need continued upgrades to improve amenity and make visits as comfortable as possible,” Mr Tollner said.

“The front hospital area will be better designed to be more pedestrian and traffic friendly, and allow for a more inviting entry to the hospital.

“The proposed design has green open spaces and additional toilets in the Emergency Department.

“The Eye Clinic to be constructed will be fit for purpose and create efficiencies to meet current demand on wait lists.

“Careful removal of asbestos in the building will also take place, along with the installation of new ceilings and floorings, and painting of the areas.

“The Budget announcement will ensure that Territorians continue to receive quality health care,” he said.

“Budget 2015 will also see $4 million, in addition to $11.9 million in Commonwealth funding, allocated to refurbish the paediatric ward, improving the healthcare provided to children, teenagers and their families,” Mr Tollner said.

“It is often a difficult situation when a loved one, particularly a child, is unwell and needing to spend time in hospital. This funding aims to make these visits to RDH a little more comfortable.
Minister for Health John Elferink said the Northern Territory Government understands the importance of providing quality health care services for Territorians and the important role the hospital plays for those in the Top End and further afield.

“The public hospital is used for a range of medical needs, whether it be an emergency situation or to receive treatment or undergo elective surgery. In recent years, RDH has also cared for victims of international disasters, including during the 2002 Bali Bombings,” he said.

A scoping study for a standalone ambulatory care facility at RDH will also be funded in Budget 2015.

The 12 new beds, funded by the Federal and Territory Governments, at the Extended Emergency Management Unit will have funding of $3.9 million ongoing for their operation.

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